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## CONSUMER ADVISORY - Lifeline

### Important changes to Lifeline Program

Lifeline provides low income consumers with discounted telephone service. The eligibility requirements now include, in addition to those already qualified because they participate in certain state benefit programs, those that (1) receive benefits from certain federal programs **OR** (2) meet certain income requirements (see chart below). Specifically, participation in one or more of these state or federal programs also qualifies individuals for Lifeline:

- ❖ Emergency Aid to Elderly, Disabled and Children (EAEDC)
- ❖ Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- ❖ MassHealth or Medicaid
- ❖ Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- ❖ Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC)
- ❖ Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- ❖ Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8)
- ❖ National School Lunch Program (free meals program only)
- ❖ Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

In addition, individuals will qualify for Lifeline if they can demonstrate that their household income meets 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Each year, the income eligibility requirements for the Lifeline program offered in Massachusetts may change. **For 2013**, qualifying Massachusetts household incomes are as follows:

#### Persons in Household

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6

#### Annual Income is below:

\$15,512  
\$20,939  
\$26,366  
\$31,793  
\$37,220  
\$42,647

7  
8

\$48,074  
\$53,501

For households with more than 8 persons, add \$5,427 for each additional person.

**More Important News:**

- Applicants must choose Lifeline service for either their landline or wireless service, but not both. Moreover, only one individual in a household may receive Lifeline Service. ***Federal law limits Lifeline discount to one per household.***
- Applicants must provide several certifications, including that their household receives Lifeline service from only one provider.
- Applicants will be required to complete an application from one of the providers for enrollment in Lifeline, along with documentation of eligibility.
- Applicants must respond annually directly to their Lifeline provider that they continue to meet eligibility requirements or they may lose their Lifeline discount. ***When your Lifeline provider asks you to recertify your eligibility, you must respond if you wish to keep your benefits.***

For more information about Lifeline and the providers that offer Lifeline, please click on the link <http://www.mass.gov/ocabr/government/oca-agencies/dtc-lp/competition-division/telecommunications-division/consumer-info/link-up-and-lifeline-what-consumers-should-know.html> or you may contact the DTC Consumer Division at 800-392-6066 or [consumer.complaints@state.ma.us](mailto:consumer.complaints@state.ma.us).

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